

Flowering Dogwood *Cornus florida*

PLANTING: Partial shade; full sun only if regularly irrigated in Summer. Requires rich, moist, well-drained organic soil with proper mulch. Excellent as a specimen tree, near a patio, corners of houses and larger buildings, groupings, under utility lines; especially effective against dark evergreen or dark building material backgrounds where the flowers are accentuated, as is the branching habit in winter. Excellent plant for four-season character (excellent flower, summer and fall foliage, fruit and winter habit). Medium growth rate.

FORM: Flowering, ornamental, tree that will grow to 25' feet high and wide at maturity, low branched tree with horizontally spreading lines, layered effect, usually with a flat-topped crown.

LEAVES: Oval, 3-6" long. A handsome bronze-green to yellow-green when unfolding; usually a dark green in summer. Fall color is a consistent red to reddish purple. Opposite.

BARK: On old trunks the bark is thick, dark gray or brownish to almost black and is prominently broken into scaly, squarish blocks; the entire effect reminiscent of an alligator's back, great characteristic particularly in winter.



FLOWERING DOGWOOD has been a favorite in America for centuries. George Washington planted it at Mt. Vernon as did Thomas Jefferson at Monticello. Early Native Americans made medicinal teas from its bark and desperate Civil War doctors used the teas as a quinine substitute. The wood is extremely hard and has been used for Weaver's shuttles, chisel and maul handles, golf club heads and yokes.



FLOWER: Showy, white flowers, blooms in April

WILDLIFE VALUE: The seed, fruit, flowers, twigs, bark and leaves are all used as food by various animals. At least 43 species of birds, including ruffed grouse, bobwhite quail and wild turkey are known to eat the fruit. Chipmunks, foxes, squirrels, skunks, rabbits, deer, beaver, black bear plus other mammals, also eat the fruit. Foliage and twigs are browsed by deer and rabbits.

NATIVE HABITAT: Massachusetts to Florida, West to Ontario, Texas and Mexico. Cultivated in 1731.



FRUIT: Glossy, drupe, red fruit, 3 to 4 in a cluster; ripening September to December; eaten by many bird species.

